Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (original) A method of removing a selected metal-ion from a solution, comprising the steps of;

a. providing a container for holding a liquid, said container having an internal surface having a metal-ion sequestering agent provided on at least a portion of said internal surface for removing a designated metal-ions from said liquid;

b. filling said container with said liquid in an open environment;

c. closing said container with said liquid contained therein; and

d. shipping said container for use of said liquid without any further processing of said container containing said liquid.

2. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said container is positioned such that said metal-ion sequestering agent contacts said liquid for a time period sufficient for removing said designated metal-ions.

3. (original) A method according to claim 2 wherein said container comprises a bottle and cap assembly.

4. (original) A method according to claim 3 wherein said bottle is made of a plastic material.

5. (original) A method according to claim 3 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is provided on the internal surface of said bottle.

6. (original) A method according to claim 3 wherein said bottle is made of a material that includes said metal-ion sequestering agent.

7. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is provided on the internal surface of said cap.

8. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said liquid has a pH equal to or greater than about 3.

9. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said liquid has a pH equal to or greater than about 4.

10. (currently amended) A method ~~A fluid container~~ according to claim 1 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is immobilized on the surface(s) of said container and has a stability constant greater than 10^{10} with iron (III).

11. (currently amended) A method ~~A fluid container~~ according to claim 1 wherein said sequestering agent is immobilized on the surface(s) of said container and has a high–affinity for biologically important metal-ions such as Mn, Zn, Cu and Fe.

12. (currently amended) A method ~~A fluid container~~ according to claim 1 wherein said sequestering agent is immobilized on the surface(s) of said container and has a high–selectivity for biologically important metal-ions such as Mn, Zn, Cu and Fe.

13. (currently amended) A method ~~A fluid container~~ according to claim 1 wherein said sequestering agent has a high-selectively for certain metal-ions but a low-affinity for at least one other ion.

14. (currently amended) A method ~~A fluid container~~ according to claim 13 wherein said certain metal-ions comprises Mn, Zn, Cu and Fe and said other at least one ion comprises calcium.

15. (currently amended) A method ~~A fluid container~~ according to claim 1 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is immobilized on the

surface(s) of said container and has a stability constant greater than 10^{20} with iron (III).

16. (currently amended) A method ~~A fluid container~~ according to claim 1 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is immobilized on the surface(s) of said container and has a stability constant greater than 10^{30} with iron (III).

17. (currently amended) A method ~~A fluid container~~ according to claim 1 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent comprises derivatized nanoparticles comprising inorganic nanoparticles having an attached metal-ion sequestrant, wherein said inorganic nanoparticles have an average particle size of less than 200 nm and the derivatized nanoparticles have a stability constant greater than 10^{10} with iron (III).

18. (currently amended) A method ~~A fluid container~~ according to claim 1 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is immobilized in a polymeric layer, and the polymeric layer contacts the fluid contained therein.

19. (original) A method for bottling a liquid having a pH equal to or greater than about 2.5, comprising the steps of:

a. providing a container having a metal-ion sequestering agent provided on at least a portion of said internal surface for inhibiting growth of microbes;

b. filling said container with a liquid having a pH equal to or greater than about2.5;

c. closing said container with said liquid contained therein; and

d. shipping said container for use without any further sterilization of said liquid and/or container.

20. (original) A method according to claim 19 wherein said container comprises a bottle and cap.

21. (original) A method according to claim 19 wherein metal-ion sequestering agent is provided on the interior surface of said bottle.

22. (original) A method according to claim 19 wherein metal-ion sequestering agent is provided on the interior surface of said cap.

23. (original) A method according to claim 19 wherein said bottle is made of a material that includes said metal-ion sequestering agent.

24. (original) A method according to claim 19 wherein said liquid is a beverage that is consumed by individuals.

25. (original) A method according to claim 19 wherein said pH is equal to or greater than 3.0.

26. (original) A method according to claim 19 wherein said pH is equal to or greater than 4.0.

27. (original) An article for inhibiting the growth of microbes in a liquid nutrient when placed in contact with the nutrient, said article having a metal-ion sequestering agent such that when said article is placed in contact with said liquid nutrient said metal-ion sequestering agent inhibits the growth of microbes in said liquid nutrient.

28. (original) An article according to claim 27 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is secured to said article by a support structure.

29. (original) An article according to claim 27 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is immobilized on the surface(s) of said container and has a stability constant greater than 10^{10} with iron (III).

30. (original) An article according to claim 27 wherein said sequestering agent is immobilized on the surface(s) of said container and has a high–affinity for biologically important metal-ions such as Mn, Zn, Cu and Fe.

31. (original) An article according to claim 27 wherein said sequestering agent is immobilized on the surface(s) of said container and has a high–selectivity for biologically important metal-ions such as Mn, Zn, Cu and Fe.

32. (original) An article according to claim 27 wherein said sequestering agent has a high-selectively for certain metal-ions but a low-affinity for at least one other ion.

33. (original) An article according to claim 32 wherein said certain metal-ions comprises Mn, Zn, Cu and Fe and said other at least one ion comprises calcium.

34. (original) An article according to claim 27 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is immobilized on the surface(s) of said container and has a stability constant greater than 10^{20} with iron (III).

35. (original) An article according to claim 27 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is immobilized on the surface(s) of said container and has a stability constant greater than 10^{30} with iron (III).

36. (original) An article according to claim 27 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent comprises derivatized nanoparticles comprising inorganic nanoparticles having an attached metal-ion sequestrant, wherein said inorganic nanoparticles have an average particle size of less than 200 nm and the derivatized nanoparticles have a stability constant greater than 10^{10} with iron (III).

37. (original) An article according to claim 27 wherein said metal-ion sequestering agent is immobilized in a polymeric layer, and the polymeric layer contacts the fluid contained therein.